



10th INDEPENDENT THOUGHT 2021 SOUTH ASIA LEGAL ESSAY COMPETITION

Under the aegis of **SAIEVAC**



Country	Girls illegal Child Marriage (%)	Legal Age of Marriage	
		M	F
Afghanistan	57%	18	16
Bangladesh	50%	21	18
Bhutan	25.8%	18	18
India	26.8%	21	18
Maldives	4%	18	18
Nepal	41%	21	18
Pakistan	37%	18	16
Sri Lanka	12%	18	18

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Citizens play a vital role in diverse ways towards strengthening the democratic framework of a nation, established legal system and rule of law. While elections come and go; issues related to children remain unheard, as they do not vote. This is a platform for young and promising legal minds to participate in nation building process by bringing back the focus on issues of children and their rights.

THEME FOR THE YEAR 2021 / Suggesting Legal Reforms for Ending Child Marriage

Child Marriage (CM) is a Human Rights violation, denial of all interrelated rights a complete loss of childhood. In many cases, CM means human trafficking, sale and purchase and commercial sexual exploitation. CMs are illegal harmful practices that demands legal answers. CM is a worldwide phenomenon grossly violating rights of children, however the share of South Asia is the largest in absolute numbers.

Welfare approach to tackle criminal violation of girls rights are unsuccessful in countering the problem. Family being sacrosanct, parental consent allowing child marriages are just few of the issues requiring legal change. Solution lies in rights-based approach discourse towards ending child marriages, with unambiguous clear legislative framework, strict implementation and State accountability. The State, as the custodian of the rights of its citizens, including children, needs to take accountability for their protection. Therefore, this essay competition envisages an analysis of the legal developments in the area of child marriages and futuristic policy and legal interventions to improve the present scenario.

Participation & Recognition

Students (enrolled in any University), not older than 30 years, having an interest in Law, Development and Human Rights are invited to participate and be a part of the change. The participant(s) must be a citizen(s) of one of the South Asian countries. The Three Best Thoughts will be awarded with a citation and

- Best Thought INR 20,000
- Second Best Thought INR 15,000
- Third Best Thought INR 10,000

The Fifteen Best Thoughts will get an eCertificate of Participation and will be published in Independent Thought Law Digest 2021 (ISBN)

Last date of submission: 15 August 2021

Declaration Best Thoughts: 11 October 2021

Queries & Submission : essay.ithought@gmail.com | Further Details: www.ithought.in
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Panel of Judges

- Dr. Rinchen Chopel, Director General, SAIEVAC/Member, UN CRC Committee
- Mr. Ghulam Haider Jelani, Acting Minister, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Afghanistan
- Mr. AKM Masud Ali, Chair, NACG Bangladesh
- Mr. Ranjan Mohanty, Chair, NACG EVAC India
- Ms. Fathimath Yumna, Deputy Minister, Children and Family Protection Services, Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services, Govt. of Maldives
- Ms. Benu Maya Gurung, Chair, NACG Nepal
- Mr. Syed Ishtiaq Gilani, Chair, NACG Pakistan
- Mr. Thangaperumal Ponpandi, Co Chair SACG/TdHNL
- Mr. Akmal Shareef, Country Director, Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) Bangladesh/Convenor, APFC (Asia Pacific Faith Based Coalition for Sustainable Development;
- Mr. Nagarjana Balanga, Vice President, HR, Cummins India Ltd.
- Mr. Vikram Srivastava, Founder, Independent Thought

Important Instruction

- Essays written in English up to 5000 words with an abstract of 300 words should be sent to essay.ithought@gmail.com
- Details of author, which includes full name, phone number(s), college details, email id and postal address on cover page along with number of words.
- Format and Font: MS Word format; Times Roman Size 12; 1" margin with line spacing 1".5' Standard citations, footnotes and reference details (not included within word limit).
- Detection of plagiarism will lead to disqualification.
- Entries submitted without personal details mentioned above or incomplete information on personal details will not be considered for evaluation.



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